THE
MAGIC LANTERN GAZETTE
of the United States and Canada

Volume 1
Number 2

Winter
1989

May Your Lantern Light up the Season!

Illustration by R. F. Bunner from *Santa Claus on a Lark* by Washington Gladden, 1890.

INSIDE

- Restoration / Part 1
- Small Treasures Found and Shared
- A London Lantern Treat
- Welcome New Members
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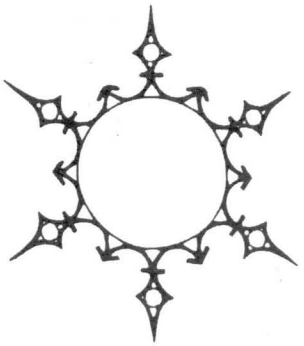
SUCH A DEAL

We need your articles for the newsletter and we'll reward you for submitting them. We have 18 T-shirts left from the 1987 convention, nicely silk-screened. The colors are light blue or black and sizes range from adult medium down to children's 14-16. Any of them are desirable ephemera. Until the shirts are gone we will send one shirt per article (size-our choice) for any offering. Articles are needed on the following topics: how you got started on your collection, any "how to do" articles (restoration, identification, giving shows, etc.), technical, historical, or research information, or anything of general interest. Remember, this is your newsletter and your participation is essential.



RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION OF MAGIC LANTERNS AND LANTERN SLIDES

BY JACK JUDSON, JR.

Having a considerably greater than passing interest in the Magic Lantern and all related matter, together with a strong desire to preserve for historical and sharing reasons, this series of articles is offered in the hope that others may join in the efforts to preserve an important part of the past for the education and enjoyment of not only the present enthusiasts, and others, but also those to follow.

Certain thoughts and Caveats must preface the series.

The First of these is the age old, "To do or not to do". I must wholeheartedly confess to being an avid follower of the to do Philosophy, when to do is both practical, within the capabilities of the do's, and/or possible. Therefore several important decisions must be made, not the least and foremost of which is "To do or not to do" based on personal choice, and the foregoing other possibilities.

Without apology, and in support of the "To do" philosophy I follow, I submit that at least in theory, history should be presented as authentically as possible within our capabilities and sensibilities. Evidence abounds of success of such efforts— Recreated Villages in Britain, the Continent and in America; Historical Pageantry of every sort and numerous other such examples. Much of this is done by careful study and research for accuracy within the capabilities of those doing such.

Additionally, there is insurmountable evidence in support of restoration and preservation of every kind of item from the past, from Old Master paintings, to sculpture, to structures, to old automobiles, machinery, boats and aircraft, to the Frescoes of the Sistine chapel. Much heat, and no little enmity has arisen over "To do or not to do" on or about each of these areas. As in the latter, when properly done "To do" was the obvious right choice. In fact, were not the proper choice made, we might likely not have the enjoyment of numerous items from the past. Thus I feel a duty not only to preserve and restore, but encourage the sensitive and careful efforts of others. In the end, that decision must be made. Value of the item is of course sometimes lost or diminished by improper work, but for the most part it is enhanced.

Of course if the decision "To do" is made, then one must be certain that it can be done as correctly as possible. This series of articles will contain information about techniques, methods, procedures and materials which I have found to produce a satisfactory result for me, for the most part.

Continued page 4

The Gazette
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A publication produced by the Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada.

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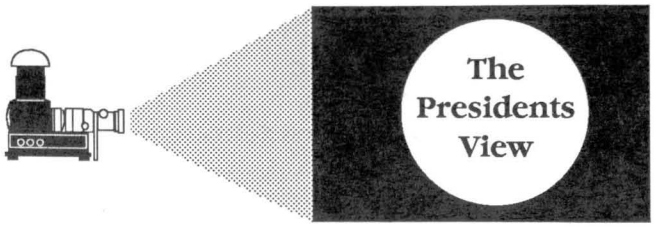

MERRY CHRISTMAS; HAPPY HANUKKAH; HAPPY FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY; HAPPY SAINT NICHOLAS DAY; HAPPY GRANDFATHER CHRISTMAS DAY.

THE VERY BEST OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON TO EACH OF YOU AND YOURS WHEREVER THIS REACHES YOU!!!! MAY THE SEASON FIND YOU WITH HEALTH AND HAPPINESS, AND MAY THE NEW YEAR BRING YOU EVEN BETTER THAN THIS ONE.

Surely this has been a great year for lanterning and the Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada. We hope to make it even better in 1990, with exciting new material to publish, including some valuable reference sources for members, and some interesting reading as well.

I am very happy with the look of our new publication, the Magic Lantern Gazette, and Larry promises we can count on bigger and better, now that some of the bugs have been worked out. Super job Larry C., keep up the good work! I am sure the members will send in news items, although we still haven't heard from Larry R., Dick B. (2 exciting trips), and likely many others. Lets share news of our finds, trips, information, shows you give, for everyone is interested in them. Leora, we haven't heard from you and Willeroy lately...what's up in Va.? I'm sure Bish, and Joe, and likely Terry B. have some shows to let us know about.

Since we are so widespread in the States, and do not often get to visit with our British and Continental members in person, it is nice to hear how folks are getting on.

The only organized area group in the U.S. to my knowledge, is located in the Northwest corner of the United States. They meet regularly, and publish a nice newsletter of their activities and meetings. I am asking the Editor to include a Regional section in the future issues of the Gazette, with the hope you will find them as interesting as I do, and that some of the members in other parts of the country might be encouraged to get together some time to swap tall tales, talk Lanterns and have some fun together also...In fact, I know that some of the members travel about the U.S. and abroad. I encourage them to make a point, if time permits, to visit a member wherever they go. I have personally found this to be exciting. Gracious Lantern people always have the time to talk about their Optical/Mechanical loves. If you do make a visit, share the experience with all of us, for everyone has something to add to our knowledge and enjoyment.

I would also suggest that every member make a special effort to spread the Lantern word, and of the Society to the Art, Media, Physics, and such departments of your local Universities. Also, Art Museums and Photography Museums do not in the main know much about the importance of the History and Uses of the Lantern in so many ways in the development of our culture and education. As you know, schools, churches, lodges, libraries, temperance groups, railroads, ship lines, medical people and numerous others used the lantern and its slides, not just to entertain, but to educate and stimulate interest in the widest variety of subjects. Can we do less, without letting down our Lantern forebears? For guidance see Part II of the new Bylaws, particularly sections 2, 3, and 4.

Til next time, the Merriest to all. Jack

Restoration continued

Naturally, there is the exception to every rule, and I have certainly stumbled over every one of them. Most exceptions have a way around them with patience. That one practices and develops the techniques, methods and procedures, on perhaps something less than the most valuable one of a kind item, or scrap parts, is vital preparation for the "Big One". If in doubt, don't do it!

Remember also that when attempting the handling of chemicals, care must be taken to carefully follow the makers instructions. I recommend the use of protective eyewear, perhaps protective gloves etc., and work in a place where a spill or such will not damage anything, and will not be a hazard to yourself or others, particularly children. With proper care, I have never had a problem. The views expressed, and the procedures, methods mentioned are those of the writer, and not to be considered those of the Magic Lantern Society of the U.S. and Canada.

Well, with all that out of the way, the series will contain sections on Restoration and Preservation of various parts of the Lantern, and Lantern Slides, such as Wood, Metals, and Glass with appropriate methods materials, and the sources for the necessary materials. Some of the materials may not be available on a retail level, but only from a manufacturer or supplier, and in those cases addresses sufficient for purchase will be furnished where possible. It may be necessary to buy more than you want, but another person may want to share such a purchase cooperatively. In any event none of the materials mentioned are in my opinion expensive, so one must consider that the end result may well justify spending a bit more. In some cases, it will be necessary to refer to a type of supplier to contact in your locale.

A few additional words of general nature. Test methods and materials in or on inconspicuous or similar, but not worthy alternate parts, to determine the efficacy of the procedure, and do it gently and patiently. Technique is frequently as important as what is being done.

We begin with the Wooden parts of Lanterns.

It is very important that the overall Lantern be studied carefully with an eye to what is needed to make it (in this case the wooden parts) appear as beautiful as they were when new, taking into consideration the soundness of the wood, the original color of the wood, and the original finish. Most often it will be necessary to remove some or all of the metal parts from the wood, and where hidden by metal parts, one can frequently find patches of the pristine finish, color and all. Nothing more than a careful vacuum cleaning, a wipe with a clean and very soft cloth, together with an application of a good wax, may be all that's necessary. You may be this lucky, but often will not be so. In that event, further assessment is necessary.

If the wood is generally sound, but is discolored, scratched, marred or the finish is damaged, then more serious efforts will be required, such as repairing blemishes, stripping the old finish, or at least partial touch up of the finish, together with trying to achieve the best possible color and appearance match to the original. I have found few Lanterns where it is necessary to completely refinish all the wood. Generally, a thorough cleaning, sometimes with one or more solvents, (water, cigarette lighter

Continued page 5

SHOW TIME

by Joe Koch

Maple Lawn School,
Sumner, Washington
Sue Hall, Principal

On November 15, Alice and I put on two back to back magic lantern shows at Maple Lawn Elementary School in Sumner, Washington. Sue Hall, one of our members, had the student body all primed for the programs, as part of their day long celebration of Washington States Centennial. Some were in costume and some in every day dress. Sue wore her grandmother's bonnet.

The program began with a little talk about the lantern after the pledge of allegiance. The first group were kids from five to eight years plus staff and visiting adults. The second group were ages eight to twelve. Each group including the adults totaled about three hundred people.

We started with welcoming slides then Betsy Ross making the flag, black and white and another slide in color (same Scene). Shown next were old Washington State scenes, followed by 10 running slides, 6 images 4" x 14" and some single slippers. I then showed "The Wreck of the Hesperus" in 10 colored slides with Sue Hall doing the reading. It worked out very well. How often do students get to see or hear their principal doing her stuff? We then did a segment on Native Americans. Next was The Story of Sugar (color), The Potato Roasters (b&w), some more single and double slippers followed by a couple of chromatropes and then Jack and the Bean Stalk. Now nearing the end , we showed 2

Continued next page

dissolve sets, 17 wood Cinderella slides, a short history of the U.S., a couple of lever slides followed by 2 choreutoscope slides- the dancing British Tar and the dancing skeleton (the piece de resistance) and good night for the last slide! Both shows went extremely well and seemed to be enjoyed by all hands. Each show with questions and answers took about 50 minuets.

CHANGING TECHNOLOGY

by Joe Koch

A few years ago Alice and I gave a magic lantern show for some young people. During the questions segment one young fellow about 9 got up and said "Mr. Koch how did you get interested in the magic lantern?" I replied, "I have always been interested in history and this was a way I could share it with others. I always seemed to soak up history like a blotter." I thought this answer would satisfy him but he stood up again and said , "Mr. Koch, what is a blotter?"

Restoration continued

fluid, acetone, or perhaps even more exotic cleaners), a light rubbing with 4/0000 steel wool, the application of Old English Furniture polish, and/or small artists brush application of lacquer, varnish, or best of all Orange/Clear shellac, a bit more of a rub with the 4/0000 steel wool, and finish off with a good paste waxing. For the waxing I have found that any good furniture grade paste wax will do if thoroughly rubbed in, and polished with a soft flannel cloth. The best wax I have found is the RENAISSANCE wax blended to a formula used by the British Museum, and available from LIGHT IMPRESSIONS, 439 Monroe Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14607- 3717. Toll free # in the U.S. 1-800-828-6216 (N.N. calls 1-800- 828-9629). Also by calling this number one may obtain a current catalog of the numerous archival products this very fine company sells. The cost of the Renaissance is about $12.00 U.S. for a tin which will do for quite some time.

If in fact the wood is split or cracked, and/or separated, then it should be reglued, and I prefer to use a 2 part quick setting (5 minutes or less) Epoxy which sets quickly, and clear. It can also be filled with some wood dust of about the same color of the raw wood, so as to make repairs somewhat more invisible, although it will not take stain thereafter. A plastic wood will take stain for larger filling of defects. Both products mentioned are readily available in most U.S. hardware or lumber stores.

Once proper repairs are accomplished, the wood should be sanded with the finest grit Garnet paper, or 4/0000 wood until a smooth surface is acquired which is ready to be refinished, either on the damaged portion, or overall if necessary.

While varnish was originally used in some cases, Orange or Clear Shellac was also used, and frankly, I always use multiple coats of the Shellac, since it gives a very exact color to the wood to match surviving original finishes. Shellac dries very quickly as it has an alcohol solvent, and may be recoated several times in a day. Please rub with 4/0000 steel wool between thoroughly dry coats, for the best possible results. Caution, never, never, use Polyurethane Varnish, for it was never available in the Lantern era, and imparts a yellowish tinge to the wood which I have never seen on any totally original lantern wood. After the wooden parts are in very nice condition after all your efforts, wax them for sealing, a nice appearance etc. It is not wrong to apply the wax with thoroughly wax loaded 4/0000 steel wool, and then polishing with a soft flannel like cloth.

Continued page 6

FREE SONG SLIDE SERVICE

Combined with the tremendous slash in express rates, effective Feb. 1st, forms the strongest combination ever offered to exhibitors, which not a single one of you can afford to overlook. We are receiving hundreds of applications daily. *Don't delay, write today.*

CHICAGO SONG SLIDE EXCHANGE, 39 So. Wabash Avenue, CHICAGO, ILL.

Restoration continued

Of course, if the wood was merely painted, then finishing is much more easily done, by carefully either retouching with a matching color paint, or complete repainting with the appropriate color and gloss of paint. Never use shiny black, when it ought to be semigloss, or flat. It is surprising that most colors other than black are very easily matched with the advent of the computer paint matching capabilities of many paint purveyors. Do not overlook Automotive paint suppliers, as they frequently are required to match old, faded, or discolored paints on autos. Some of them even have the capability of putting the matched color up in spray cans at what I consider a reasonable cost, considering everything.

Small cheap water color artists brushes are available at many school supply stores, and have not only the size, but the cost which allows them to be discarded after use, rather than laboriously cleaned.

Once again, wax after the paint is dry, to seal and protect.

For other needed supplies for wood working, any store selling good cabinet makers supplies will generally have needed stains etc., including the 4/0000 steel wool.

There now, it was not all that hard to do was it, especially after you decided "To do". You will like the result, and will be complimented on the fine condition of that part of your Lantern at least.

In the next section to appear in the Spring of 1990, I will tell you how to be even happier, and garner more compliments on your beautiful Lanterns by restoring, reworking, and in some cases, replacing metal parts which are not in the best of condition. Especially of interest will be how to safely remove rust, corrosion, and to easily make your brass parts look like original...Yes, even the nice Gold color, not the just polished Yellow look! It can be done. Also, "Russian Iron" can be Reblacked or Reblued!

The third section will deal with slide restoration, and will be concluded with a supplier list, and suggested sources for generally available materials.

So get the wood ready and the next time we will start with the metals. In the meantime, I welcome any questions and suggestions, including tips others have discovered to work well for them.

Jack

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Jack Judson, Jr.

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From "The Moving Picture World" 1913

A VISIT TO THE BERGHS

by Sharon Cederblom

I had the opportunity to visit Nancy and Margaret Bergh, on October 10th. While I was in Minneapolis, where I was working on a travel trade show, Nancy and Margaret went out of their way to make me feel at home. They came across town from their home to pick me up and treat me to the sights of their town and collections.

It was gracious of Nancy and Margaret to extend their hospitality because we had only met at the convention banquet in Seattle.

I want to thank them both so much for the evening and the goodies they sent with me, which I enjoyed the next evening in Cleveland.

CLARK ART INSTITUTE SEES MAGIC LANTERN SHOW

On October 13, 1989, The Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts was the location of the show "Virtue Is Its Own Reward," presented by David Brooke, one of our members. The show was scheduled in conjunction with the exhibition "Virtue Rewarded: Victorian Paintings from the Forbes Magazine Collection." David , director of the Clark and collector of magic lantern slides, used a biunial projector (originally powered by lime light), converted to electricity, narrated the show and was accompanied by music by Howie Levitz.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The new By-Laws of the Society adopted at the business meeting during the 1989 Convention in Seattle define the fiscal year and dues of the Society. These are given on page 3 of the 1989-1990 Society Directory.

PART V. Fiscal Year, Dues, Financial Affairs of the Society:

A.

1. The Fiscal Year for the Society shall be Jan. 1 through Dec. 31

2. The Annual Dues are payable on Jan. 1, each year to the then treasurer of the Society at the treasurer's address of record.

3. Schedule of Dues by Class of Membership:

a. Regular member (includes spouse) $20.00.

b. Additional members over 18 from the same family $5.00.

c. Institutional members - $25.00.

d. Commercial members - $25.00.

e. Honorary Life members - No Dues.

f. Founding Charter members - Regular Dues.

g. Past Chairman - Regular Dues.

B.

1. Members permanently residing outside the United States shall pay the same dues per class in the U.S., but the Society reserves the right to surcharge for additional mailing costs to locations outside the U.S.

2. Notice in writing shall be sent to every member whose dues are unpaid by March 1 and if not paid by April 1, the respective membership in the Society will cease on April 1.

3. No member shall be entitled to the privileges of the Society so long as the respective dues are unpaid.

4. Readmittance will be by Part II, # 1.

5. The amount of annual dues is subject to annual Review on or about Oct. 1 Any changes deemed necessary will be announced by Nov. 1 for the following year.

After April 1, a new directory will be printed and sent to each member.

The new issue of the directory will not only include names and addresses of the members, but also their magic lantern interests and expertise.

Please fill out the membership application (included with this newsletter) and send it with your membership dues to: Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada

Robert D. Hall Secretary/Treasurer
3321 114th Street N.W.
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

SMALL TREASURES FOUND AND SHARED

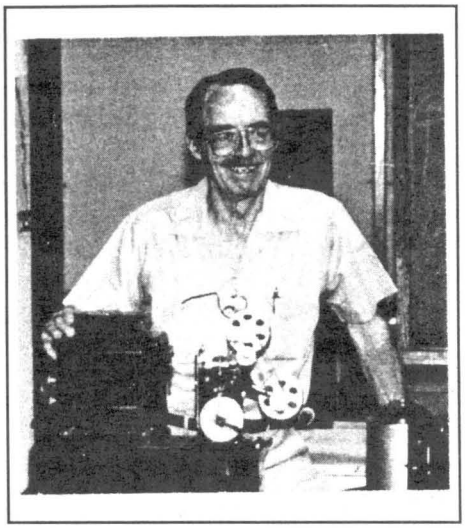
A very small Lantern illustration on P168, Dec. 1989 Smithsonian. Same illustration previously used on the back of the 3-86 American Lantern Journal, with note...it is the emblem of the Dutch Lantern Society!! and relates to one of the lead characters in an 18th Century scandal.

National Geographic, February, 1989, page 242, contains a very nicely colored copy of three, what I would term "rare", Lantern handbills which coupled with the text, reveal the very famous Western Photographer William Henry Jackson was also a Lantern Showman. Also revealed is his relationship with the Detroit Photographic Co., and Detroit Publishing Co. Perhaps you have some of his photos on slides sold by one of these two companies!

A nice article on the History of Photography in the October, 1989 issue of the National Geographic. Not much about Lanterns though.

Photos of two of our members in the Summer 1989 issue of the New England Journal of Photographic History—the two members (two are one in one instance with apologies to Debbie or Terry) are Terry Borton in action giving a show, and smiling Alan Kattelle. We will try to find the news even if no one sends it to us. I am hoping that the Journal, Alan Kattelle, one of the photographers, and Lowell Bursch will not complain if we show our members pictures crediting them with their fine work.

Contained in the same issue of the same Journal, is a nice article by Alan Kattelle about a visit to the Museum of the Moving Image at 35th Ave. and 36th St. in Queens, New York City. Perhaps there may be some pre-cinema items on display should you drop by when in N.Y.C., although none were mentioned in the article.



Lowell Bursch photo.

Alan Kattelle

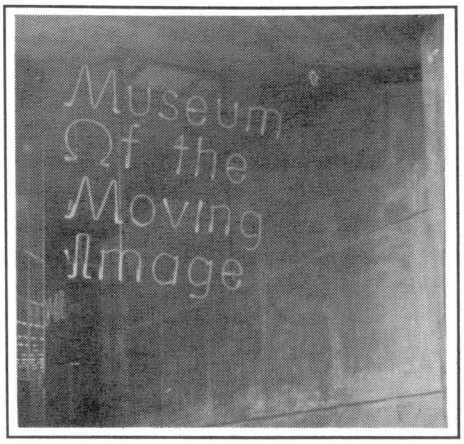
Alan Kattelle photo.

Terry and Debbie Borton shown during their magic lantern lecture.

If anyone knows of some little hidden treasures, please write with details, so they can be shared in the Gazette.

Courtesy of Jack's Gleanings

A LONDON LANTERN TREAT



Visiting the MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE in London is a very special treat for anyone interested in the Magic Lantern and its place in the prehistory of the cinema. It is not only a first rate museum for the kind and number of related artifacts, but also the displays are extremely well done, leading one from early history right through Television.

Everything is well described and the layout of the labyrinthine configuration of the museum is not difficult to follow, allowing for one to continue through history, or go back to review with ease, and then continue the journey.

There are many lanterns on exhibit, both in groups and singly, and interestingly enough combining forms such as the use of the lantern as the light source for the early form of motion picture projection. Everything from the early lantern to the grand Triunnial is there for viewing not available elsewhere.

Also displayed are a nice variety of Optical Toys for the enjoyment of those whose interests include them in conjunction with the Lantern interest. In short, there is something for everyone.

I spent about 2 hours there in October, and should like to have spent more to fully absorb everything. Especially is this so considering the very nice gift shop and book departments, where some Lantern books were available.

When visiting London this is a must stop, particularly if the Tower has been seen. (Not one Lantern there that I could find!). The address is: Museum of the Moving Image, South Bank, Waterloo, London SE1 8XT

Plan a day or two extra if you are going to the British Lantern Convention in April, so that you can take in this treat. See you there. Jack

THE STORY OF THE LOGO

The new logo of the Society has as it's centerpiece, the uniquely American invented and patented L.J. Marcy Sciopticon Lantern. It was chosen due to it's American origin, and the silhouette is so easily recognizable worldwide.

Lorenzo James Marcy, then of Northport, Rhode Island obtained the first patent for the Sciopticon on April 28, 1868 as # 77300. He also obtained other patents, and the form of the Sciopticon evolved to the now most recognizable form. The name and form (with variations in various countries) became very well known indeed throughout the world.

This centerpiece and logo fill a need for a uniquely American identity, and will be utilized wherever possible to identify the Society. It lends itself to enlargement and reduction.

The two accompanying illustrations show the first patent shape, and the later most well known version we have adopted. For further information refer to any of the editions of the Sciopticon Manual, and/or the article appearing in the June, 1986 issue of the American Magic Lantern Bulletin..Vol. VIII, No. 1.

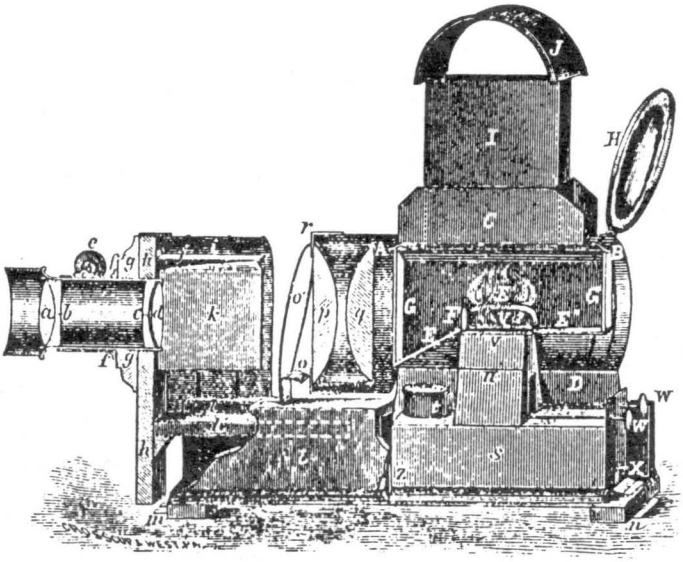


Figure 3: Marcy Sciopticon. This popular magic lantern had a moveable slide for fading in and out, and a second slide for raising and lowering colored filters.

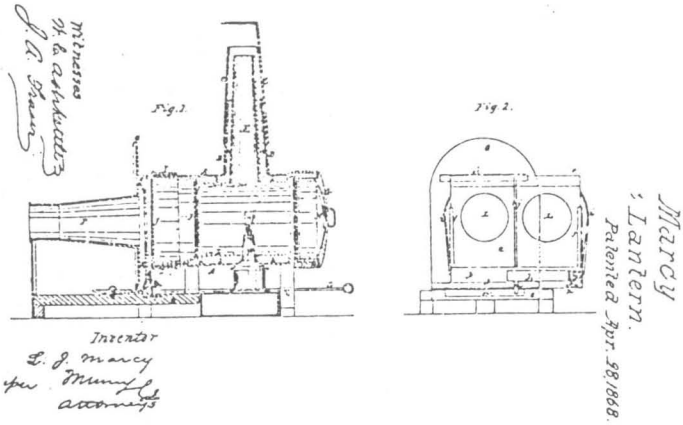


Figure 1: 1868 patent drawing of Marcy's Sciopticon

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome the following new members:

Jordan Patkin
P.O.Box 438
Lvy, VA 22945
Hm.# 804-979-3237
Wrk.# 804-979-8277

Has interest in lanterns, buy, sell and trade.

Jean P. Salier
Ratieville Cleres
France 76690
Hm.# 35-33-1848
Wrk.# 35-65-5274

Interest: Toy lanterns, hand painted and animated slides, optical toys and all kinds of items related topre-cinema.

Peter Thomashow
350 West 20th Street
New York, NY 10011
Phone 212-255-8630
or 212-989-0213

Has strong interest in lantern slides and optical devices in the area of astronomy, the stars, planets and heavens.

Scott Wilson
18525 Lookout Dr.
Yorba Linda, CA 92686
Hm.# 714-970-8531
Wrk.# 213-531-6538

Interest in Chinaman lanterns and optical toys.

UPDATE TO MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Corrections:

Richard Balzer's Zip is 02172
Nancy Bergh's Zip is 55419
Terry Borton's Zip is 06438
David Brooke's Zip is 01267
Phil Fagerholm's Zip is 98101-1013
James P. Flanagan's, Sr. Zip is 07871
Robert Gunshanan's Zip is 06078
John Edward Hill's Zip is 02054-1721
John V. Hodin's address is
27 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02116
Ricky Jay's address is
Mulholland Library
10100 Santa Monica Blvd., 5th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90067
Jack Judson's Jr. Phone Number should be - 512-824-9995
Marshall Katler's Zip is 02067
Alan D. Kattelle's Zip is 01749
Thurman F. Naylor's Zip is 02167
Kathryn Oberdeck's Zip is 06511
Walt Pfeifer's address is
P.O. Box 1936
Abilene, TX 79604
Mike Smith's address is
"Prospect," High St.
Nutley, Uckfield , East Sussex,
TN22 3NH
ENGLAND

Addition to directory:

Doris Ramstead
10401 SE 276th St.
P.O.Box 216
Kent, WA 98035

Bob Skell
P.O. Box 7175
East Wenatchee, WA 98802

GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT
KEY CHAIN POCKET VIEWERS

Item from the 1989 Convention
20 Different Images of Lanterns and lantern subjects.

Some example titles:

- Parabalon Lantern (1880's)
- Scientific Lantern by McIntosh
- Single Lantern by Pettibone Mfg, Co.
- Verticle Biunnial by A.D. Handy Co..(1900)
- Normal School Lantern
- Painting of Lanterist and family watching
- Coming Attraction Slide
- British Single Lantern
- Fleur de Lis Lantern (1899)
- Horizontal Biunnial Limelight
- Single Lantern (1870's)
- "Torpedo" Lantern (film and slide)
- Combination Ltrn. ,S. Lubin & Co.(1898)
- Single Lantern Douglas Light Co.
- Itinerant Lanterist
- Hand painted winter slide

Sold in sets of ten. Sets are pre-selected from the above list.

$10.00 US per set of ten
plus $2.00 shipping

all monies go to the Society